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The Relations between Smoking Motives, Personality and Feelings.

This research will examine smoking behavior and motivations in the context of personality structure, life change and stress. In particular, an attempt will be made to distinguish psychologically adaptive from maladaptive smoking.

A series of self-report instruments measuring personality, life stress, smoking motivation and mood will be administered to 1,050 adult males, participants in an ongoing longitudinal study of nonpathological aging. These data will be analyzed in conjunction with existing psychological, sociodemographic and biomedical data. Longitudinal analyses will be used, along with multivariate statistical techniques of cluster and factor analysis.

Previous work has resulted in the identification of three major dimensions of personality: anxiety-adjustment, extraversion-intraversion, and openness to experience. Research efforts on measuring smoking motives have been based on classifying the functions which smoking serves for the individual derived from the reasons given for smoking. Six factors or motives have been consistently identified which show differential relations to the three personality dimensions and actual smoking behavior.

During the current year, research will focus on data collection and the refinement of instruments. Specifically, participants will be surveyed as to the time, place and circumstances in which they smoke. Additionally, the longitudinal stability of motives for smoking will be examined and a motive-based typology of smokers will be developed. Different smoker motive-based typology of smokers will be developed. Different smoker types will be characterized in terms of mood and personality dimensions, as well as age and sociodemographic status.

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